

# Climate bill update

Summer 2008



The climate change bill completed its passage through the House of Commons committee stage on the 10 July. The key votes on the bill have now been pushed back to October/November 2008.

Parliament went on its summer holidays on 22 July and there will be no further work in Parliament on the climate bill before then.

## 80 per cent

During the committee stage 83 Labour MPs signalled support for an amendment which would increase the target for reducing carbon dioxide emissions to a cut of at least 80 per cent by 2050.

Labour MP Anne Snelgrove, who sat on the committee, said:

*"The combined membership and influence of the vast number of NGOs that*

*have come together ... will help to drive understanding in this country on the importance of climate change. I believe that there has been a sea change since the election of 2005, which has put the environment and climate change right at the top of our agenda. That is another reason why, as a Government, we must show our understanding and commitment to upping the climate target to 80 per cent, because the people and groups in that coalition will be looking to us for a very strong signal that we take this issue seriously."*

## Aviation

In addition, 84 Labour MPs supported an amendment to include aviation emissions within the targets in the bill by 2013 at the latest. Unfortunately the government have still refused to accept

either of these amendments. Given the government's control of the committee stage, the bill therefore still has the inadequate target of a 60 per cent cut in emissions by 2050 which does not include the emissions from aviation. It is a fantastic testament to the thousands of campaigners around the country who have worked tirelessly on the climate bill that so many Labour MPs are willing to go against their party's position.

The Liberal Democrats continue to support an 80 per cent target which includes aviation. The Conservatives have yet to indicate clearly their support or not for an 80 per cent target and including aviation.

## **Carbon credits**

Before the bill entered the committee stage, WDM wrote to every MP pointing out that the bill as at present will not necessarily lead to any reduction in the UK's contribution to climate change. The bill allows emission reduction targets to be met through buying 'carbon credits' from overseas rather than actually reducing emissions in the UK. This, combined with the fact the bill ignores aviation, means the bill as it presently stand will not reduce emissions at all by 2050. To find out more about this issue, read WDM's report, 'Mind the gap' at: <http://www.wdm.org.uk/resources/reports/climate/mindthegap01032008.pdf>

The House of Lords introduced an

amendment in March saying at least 70 per cent of the reduction in emissions had to be achieved by actually reducing emissions in the UK rather than buying carbon credits from overseas. Unfortunately, the government rejected this amendment when the bill came into the House of Commons. This means there is likely to be a 'ping-pong' between the Commons and the Lords in October /November once the bill has finished its passage through the Commons.

## **Final, final push!?**

WDM campaigners have been working hard on the climate bill since the spring of 2007. It has been a long effort, and delays in the parliamentary process mean it has been longer than we first expected.

But the campaigning so far means we have already got annual targets introduced into the bill, which many thought would never happen. And we may still achieve a major success in getting the target increased to 80 per cent including aviation. We may even get a limit on the amount of carbon credits which can be used to meet targets, although this approach of the government will need further challenge once the bill has become law.

With Parliament going on its summer break, now may be a time to take a breather, ready for the final, final push in October/November. We will be in touch.